

App. No. 10/409,279
Office Action Dated July 15, 2004

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. The Specification and claim 1 are hereby amended. No new matter has been added.

The revision to claim 1, reciting "the heat generation suppressing unit suppresses heat... not in a whole area but in a part of a region" is supported on page 6, lines 13-24.

The title is amended to reflect the use of induction heating as requested.

Claims 1 and 18 were rejected as being anticipated by Okabayashi (US 6,037,576). Applicants traverse this rejection. Okabayashi teaches a heat generating member (sleeve 5) whose entire area is heated in order to accomplish heat transfer. Okabayashi does not suggest the feature of claim 1, where heat transfer can be controlled "not in a whole area but in a part of a region". See Okabayashi, column 7, lines 5-7 and figure 2, which teaches that the entire sleeve temperature is controlled. Favorable reconsideration of claim 1 and 18 is requested.

Claims 1-4, 7-10, and 18 were rejected as being unpatentable over Asakura (WO 02/29498) in view of Kato (JP 10-74009). Applicants traverse this rejection. Kato does not solve the deficiencies of Asakura. The Examiner noted that Asakura does not disclose the heat generation suppressing unit suppressing heat "in a region corresponding to a region including at least a center portion of the body to be heated in a width direction". Kato teaches the heat generation suppressing unit suppressing heat generated by blocking magnetic flux in the desired region. However, Kato does not suggest heat suppression in the center portion. When a small-width paper sheet is passed, the heat generation suppressing unit, which is located in a non-paper passing region, can only suppress heat generation in this non-paper passing region. This is in contrast to claim 1, where it is recited that "the heat generation suppressing unit suppresses heat generation of the heat generating member in a region that corresponds to a region including at least a center portion of the body to be heated in a width direction". The center portion coincides with the region where both the paper passes and heat suppression is possible. See page 16, lines

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11-12, where it recites that a small-width paper sheet is passed only in the center portion. Placement of a heat generation suppressing unit and a temperature sensor in the center provide for an even temperature distribution through the entire width of the heat generating tube (see page 16, line 2 through page 20, line 4). It is not possible to combine Asakura and Kato and arrive at the claimed invention, as they only disclose configurations where heat generation is suppressed in the non-paper passing regions. Favorable consideration of independent claim 1 and dependent claims 2-4, 7-10, and 18 is requested. Claims 2-4, 7-10, and 18 depend from claim 1.

In view of the above, favorable reconsideration in the form of a notice of allowance is requested. Any questions regarding this communication can be directed to the undersigned attorney, Douglas P. Mueller, Reg. No. 30,300, at (612)371-5237.

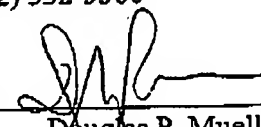
Respectfully submitted,

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